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U. S. Department of Agriculture

THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Monday, December 28, 1936.

Hello folks. Only three more days of the old year during which we can check up and close the account and strike a trial balance before we tackle the problems of 1937. The old year has been pretty tough on some of us with its droughts and its untimely frosts and other departures from safe and sane behavior, but on the whole I think we have come through pretty well and are in much better position to go forward than we were at this time last year. We have passed the shortest day and the longest night. Already there are signs of spring although winter has just begun. The first sign of spring to come to my attention was the arrival the other day of the first 1937 seed catalog. Soon the seedsmen's catalogs will be coming from all parts of the country and we can spend our evenings looking them over and figuring what new fruits, vegetables and flowers we want to try in our gardens and orchards the coming season.

Never in the history of this country, or any other country for that matter, has so much effort been put forth to gather information useful to those who draw their living from the soil and those who cultivate gardens for the pure love of the work and the pleasure they get out of it. Today, as I am talking to you, the scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture, the State Colleges and Experiment Stations, as well as those from commercial and private organizations, are turning their faces toward Atlantic City, New Jersey, and the meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and associate organizations. No doubt some of you have the idea that a scientist is a queer looking sort of a duck who spends most of his time peering through a microscope and when he isn't working in his laboratory he goes around talking to himself. That's far from the fact. The modern scientist uses a microscope to be sure to discover the hidden wonders of nature. He tries experiments in his laboratory and when he gets his cue he goes into the greenhouse or the fields and sets in motion the natural elements that result in the production of new varieties or conquering insects and diseases. Today, and all of this week, these scientists are meeting together in Atlantic City to compare notes, and give the results of their years research.

I presume that the production of varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers that are immune to certain of the virus diseases can be set down as among the most outstanding achievements of the scientists during the past few years. Thanks to their work we can now grow tomatoes on land so badly infested with tomato wilt that ordinary varieties are a complete failure. We can grow good crops of cabbage on land so infested with the disease known as cabbage yellows that not one good head out of a hundred could be produced of the old and susceptible varieties.

(over)

Now in the minute I have left today I just want to wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year and if I, or any of the workers here in the Horticultural Division of the Department can be of any service to you, don't hesitate to call upon us. We may not be able to answer all your questions. The workers in your own State Experiment Station and College and your County Agent are closer to you and your problems than we are. There is one resolution that I hope a lot of you folks will make, and keep, the coming year and that is when you write a letter asking for information that you write your name and address plainly. We quite frequently get letters that are plainly written, all but the name or address, and grey hairs are being added to our already grizzling domes trying to figure out those names and addresses, and if you do not state whether you are Miss or Mrs. don't be offended if we jump at the wrong conclusion.

Happy New Year to you all.

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